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N°. LV.

OXBERRY'S

NEW

English Drama.

THE

MERCHANT OF VENICE,

A TRAGEDY;

BY

W. Shakspeare.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY—COURT-STREET:
A. T. GOODRICH & CO. NEW-YORK.

1823.

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Oxberry's Edition.

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THE

MERCHANT OF VENICE,

A COMEDY;

By William Shakspeare.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

By W. OXBERRY, *Comedian.*

BOSTON:

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Remarks.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE Merchant of Venice has always been deservedly popular from the vigour displayed in the character of Shylock, yet it is far from being the best of Shakspeare's comedies. The main plot evidently ends with the fourth act, and, which is worse, the underplot, though embellished with all the charms of poetry, is not very interesting in its incidents. The story of the caskets is too much like a fairy tale; the spectator, when transported from Venice to Belmont, feels that he is no longer treading on the land of reality; he is besides too little prepared for the love of Bassanio and Portia, to sympathize in its success or failure; at best this portion of the play appears like the beautiful dream of a beautiful mind, and very little harmonizes with the stern reality of the main plot, which never for a moment deviates from nature. All that passes at Belmont is in the true spirit of poetry, but of poetry that has left the earth; its creations are as fantastic and unsubstantial as the airy images that the thin clouds build up in a summer's noon; this is more particularly the case in the beginning of the last act; there is a beautiful soul-stealing melancholy in the scene between Lorenzo and Jessica, but which has more of Heaven than of human life about it.

The character of Shylock, the principal feature of this comedy, has long afforded ground for contention amongst

the critics. It has been on the one hand very seriously argued that the Jew is an injured man, whose revenge is both just and natural, while the opponents of this doctrine, looking only to the terrible measure of vengeance, have denounced him as a wretch, upon whom all ideas of mercy are thrown away. One would suppose that this point might be very easily settled, but criticism is near akin to law, and loves to raise disputes, where a ground for contention does not naturally exist. That the Jew is an injured man is placed beyond the reach of question; he says to Antonio,—

——————————many a time and oft
On the Rialto you have rated me
About my money and my usances.
* * * * * *
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gabardine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.—*Act* 1. *sc.* 3.

Now the merchant is so far from denying this, that he bluntly replies,—

I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.—*Idem.*

The Jew therefore is justly entitled to call himself an injured man; but what is his revenge? The mean safe revenge of an assassin, who stabs in the back the enemy he does not dare to face. Had Shylock boldly resigned his own life for vengeance, the courage of the deed would have commanded respect, for such is the perverseness of human nature, that it even prefers splendid vice to quiet virtue. Every spectator sympathizes with King Richard, though compared with him the Jew is a perfect innocent; but even in a moral point of view, the open murderer has at least one virtue that the secret assassin wants—namely courage.

Shylock, however, has some redeeming qualities; he has mind and that in the highest meaning of the word; there is an overwhelming energy in all his thoughts and expressions. In the trial scene, when every heart is an enemy to him, and every hand is raised against him, he never for a moment blenches; and his language throughout is as glowing as his thought.

The quibbling, conceited, Launcelot, is a very happy effort, and such as no writer but Shakspeare could have succeeded in; vanity is the leading feature of his mind, but it is infinitely diversified in its effects, and he is always so good-humoured in his egotism, that he never loses the regard of the spectator. His soliloquy is delightful, though it is scarcely possible for any actor to realize its beauty.

It may be doubted, whether in drawing the lovely Portia, the poet did not draw from his own imagination; a Juliet or an Imogine, however rare, may yet be found in life, but where are we to seek for the feminine softness and strong understanding of Portia? Nature is infinitely too economical to unite such rare qualities in a single individual; nor in fact do they seem to harmonize.

Of the language, it is impossible to speak in terms of adequate praise, unless we could borrow the pen of Shakspeare; it is all beauty, and no less simple than it is beautiful; this is more particularly the case in the fifth act: the great poet seems to have felt the deficiency of his plot, and to have lavished in consequence all the treasures of his abundant fancy in decorating the barren ground. To say that he has been successful would be superfluous, for when did Shakspeare task his genius to an effort without success?

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation is two hours and ten minutes. The first act occupies the space of twenty-four minutes;—the second, twenty-two;—the third, thirty-four;—the fourth, thirty;—and the fifth, twenty.—The half-price commences, at nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

By R.H. - - - - - is meant - - - - - Right Hand.
L.H. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Left Hand.
S.E. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Second Entrance.
U.E. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Upper Entrance.
M.D. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Middle Door.
D.F. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Door in Flat.
R.H.D. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Right Hand Door.
L.H.D. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Left Hand Door.

Costume.

DUKE OF VENICE.

Crimson velvet robe, doublet and trunks.

ANTONIO.

Black velvet doublet, trunks and cloak.

BASSANIO.

First dress.—Light mixture Venetian dress.—Second dress.—Green velvet do. trimmed richly with silver, hat and feathers.

SHYLOCK.

Black garberdeen, with crimson vest, black hat.

SOLANIO.

Green Venetian dress trimmed with silver, velvet hat and feathers.

SALARINO.

Ibid.

GRATIANO.

Scarlet.—Ibid.

LORENZO.

Grey,—Ibid.

TUBAL.

Black garberdeen and hat.

LAUNCELOT.

First dress.—Black jacket, white sash, orange breeches and stockings.—Second dress.—Brown cloth doublet, breeches and cloak, trimmed with red.

GOBBO.

Drab coloured doublet, breeches and cloak, trimmed with brown.

SERVANTS.

Venetian livery.

SENATORS.

Black robes, bound with ermine, and do. capes.

SOLDIERS.

Scarlet doublets and trunks.

PORTIA.

First dress.—White satin, trimmed with silver and spangled drapery.—Second dress.—Counsellor's dress, complete.—Third dress.—White muslin, trimmed with satin ribbon, white muslin drapery.

NERISSA.

First dress.—Blue sarsnet, trimmed with silver.—Second dress.—Black velvet jacket, trunks and cloak, trimmed with black satin.—Third dress.—White muslin.

JESSICA.

White satin body, and leno petticoat trimmed with silver.

LADIES.

Full Court dresses.

Persons Represented.

	Drury Lane,	*Covent Garden,*
Duke of Venice	Mr. Powell.	Mr. Chapman.
Antonio	Mr. Pope.	Mr. Egerton.
Bassanio	Mr. Rae.	Mr. B. Thornton.
Salanio	Mr. Barnard.	Mr. Treby.
Salarino	Mr. Vining.	Mr. Claremont.
Gratiano	Mr. Penley.	Mr. Jones.
Lorenzo	Mr. T. Cooke.	Mr. Duruset.
Shylock	Mr. Kean.	Mr. Terry.
Tubal	Mr. Meredith.	Mr. Atkins.
Launcelot	Mr. Oxberry.	Mr. Simmons.
Gobbo	Mr. Butler.	Mr Murray.
Balthazar	Mr. Elliot.	Mr. Howell.
Portia	Mrs. W. West.	Mrs. Faucit.
Nerissa	Mrs. Orger.	Miss S. Booth.
Jessica	Miss Povey.	Miss Matthews.

THE

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and* SOLANIO, L.H.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad;
It wearies me; you say, it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

Sol. (R.H.) Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies (1) with portly sail,

(1) In Ricaut's *Maxims of Turkish Polity*, ch. xiv. it is said, "those vast carracks called *Argosies*, which are so much famed for the vastness of their burthen and bulk, were corruptly so denominated from *Ragosies*," i. e. ships of *Ragusa*, a city and territory on the gulph of Venice, tributary to the Porte. Shakspeare has given the name of *Ragozine* to the Pirate, in *Measure for Measure*.

Like signiors and rich burghers of the flood,
Do over-peer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Sala. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass,(1) to know where sits the wind;
Peering in maps, for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
Would make me sad.

Sol. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows, and of flats;
And see my wealthy Andrew (2) dock'd in sand,
Vailing (3) her high top lower than her ribs,
To kiss her burial.
Shall I have the thought
To think on this: and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing, bechanc'd, would make me sad?
But, tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandize.

(1) By holding up the grass, or any light body that will bend by a gentle blast, the direction of the wind is found.

(2) The name of a Ship.

(3) *Vailing*, means to put off the hat, to strike sail, to give sign of submission.

Ant. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandize makes me not sad.
Sala. Why then you are in love.
Ant. Fie, fie!
Sala. Not in love neither? Then let's say, you are sad,
Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you, to laugh, and leap, and say, you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus, (1)
Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes, (2)
And laugh like parrots, at a bag-piper;
And other of such vinegar aspect,
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile, (3)
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.
Sol. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,

(1) Here Shakspeare shows his knowledge in the antique. By *two-headed Janus*, is meant those antique bifrontine heads, which generally represent a young and smiling face, together with an old and wrinkled one, being of Pan and Bacchus; of Saturn and Apollo, &c.

(2) This gives a very picturesque image of the countenance in laughing, when the eyes appear half shut.

(3) Because such are apt enough to shew their teeth in anger.

Gratiano, and Lorenzo: fare you well;
We leave you now with better company.
Sala. I would have staid till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.
(*Crosses to Solanio.*)
Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

Enter BASSANIO, GRATIANO, *and* LORENZO, L.H.

Sala. Good morrow, my good lords.
Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when? (*Crosses to Salarino.*)
You grow exceeding strange; must it be so?
Sol. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.
[*Exeunt Sol. and Sala.* R.H.
Lor. My lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you; but, at dinner time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.
Bass. I will not fail you.
Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it, that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.
Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool: (1)
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes? and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks;
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream (2) and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness (3) entertain,
With purpose to be drest in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who should say, *I am Sir Oracle*,
And, when I ope my lips, let no dog bark! (4)
O, my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; who, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears, [fools.
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers
I'll tell thee more of this another time;
But fish not with this melancholy bait,

(1) Alluding to the common comparison of human life to a stage play. So that he desires his may be the fool's or buffoon's part, which was a constant character in the old farces; from whence came the phrase *to play the fool.*

(2) Alluding to the manner in which the film extends itself over milk in scalding.

(3) An obstinate silence.

(4) This seems to be a proverbial expression.

For this fool's gudgeon, this opinion.—
Come, good Lorenzo :—fare ye well, awhile—
(*Crosses to* L.H.)
I'll end my exhortation after dinner. (1)

Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time :
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own [tongue.

Ant. Farewell ; I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i'faith ; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.
[*Exeunt Gra. and Lor.* L.H.

Ant. Is that any thing now ?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice : his reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff ; you shall seek all day ere you find them ; and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well : tell me now, what lady is this same,
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to day promis'd to tell me of ?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,

(1) The humour of this consists in its being an allusion to the practice of the Puritan preachers of those times ; who being generally very long and tedious, were often forced to put off that part of their sermon called the *exhortation* till after dinner.

By something shewing a more swelling port (1)
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is, to come fairly off from the great debts,
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gag'd. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money, and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it:
And, if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions. [shaft,

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth; and by advent'ring both,
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

(1) *Port*, in the present instance, comprehends the idea of expensive equipage, and external pomp of appearance.

Ant. You know me well; and herein spend
but time,
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong,
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then do but say to me, what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest (1) unto it: therefore, speak.

Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left,
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word, [eyes
Of wond'rous virtues; sometimes (2) from her
I did receive fair speechless messages;
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors.
O, my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate.

Ant. Thou know'st, that all my fortunes are
at sea;
Nor have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore go forth,
Try what my credit can in Venice do;
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,

(1) *Prest* may not here signify *impress'd*, as into military service, but ready.—*Pret, Fr.*

(2) In old English *sometimes* is synonimous with *formerly*.

To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake.
[*Exeunt; Ant.* L.H. *Bass.* R.H.

SCENE II.—*Portia's House at Belmont.*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA, R.H.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick, that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness therefore, to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, (1) but competency lives longer

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounc'd.

Ner. They would be better, if well follow'd.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages, princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband:—O me,

(1) i. e. Superfluity sooner *acquires* white hairs; becomes old.—We still say, How did he *come by* it?—To come by it is to attain.

the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead father:—Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none.

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations; therefore, the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests, of gold, silver, and lead, (whereof, who chooses his meaning, chooses you,) will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou nam'st them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level (1) at my affection.

Ner. First there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt, (2) indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself: I am much afraid, my lady, his mother, play'd false with a smith.

Ner. Then, there is the County (3) Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who

(1) Estimate.

(2) *Colt* is used for a witless, heady, gay youngster; whence the phrase used of an old man too juvenile, that he still retains his *colt's tooth.*

(3) *County* and *Count* in old language were synonimous.

should say, "An if you will not have me, choose:" he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth, than to either of these. Heaven defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. Heaven made him, and therefore let him pass for a man.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man: and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an the worst fall that ever fell, I hope, I shall make shift to go without him. (*Crosses to* R.H.)

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for, if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determinations: which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more

suit: unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, (1) depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, (2) I will die as chaste as Diana, (3) unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will: I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray heaven grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por Yes, yes, it was Bassanio, as I think, so he was call'd.

Ner. True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter BALTHAZAR, L.H.

Por. How now! what news? (*Crosses to* L.H.)

Bal. The four strangers seek for you, madam,

(1) Command laid upon you.

(2) The Sybils were prophetesses, and lived to a great age, several centuries. The most celebrated is the *Cumæan Sybil*, mentioned by Virgil, Æneid 6, who conducted Æneas to the infernal regions.

(3) The chastity of *Diana* is not *unimpeached.* She was suspected of an intrigue with Endymion.

to take their leave; and there is a fore-runner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco: who brings word, the prince, his master, will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach. Come, Nerissa.—Sirrah, go before.—Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt*, L.H.

SCENE III.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter SHYLOCK *and* BASSANIO, R.H.

Shy. Three thousand ducats,—well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months,—well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound,—well.

Bass. May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no; my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me, that he is sufficient: yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripo-

lis, another to the Indies; I understand moreover upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England,—and other ventures he hath, squander'd abroad: but ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land rats, and water rats, water thieves, and land thieves; I mean pirates; and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks: the man is, notwithstanding, sufficient:—three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assur'd you may.

Shy. I will be assur'd, I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me: may I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork: to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into: I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.—What news on the Rialto?— (*Crosses to* R.H.)
Who is he comes here?

Bass. This is signior Antonio. [*Exit*, L.H.

Shy. How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him, for he is a christian:
But more, for that, in low simplicity,
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice:
If I can catch him once upon the hip, (1)

(1) This, Dr. Johnson observes, is a phrase taken from the practice of wrestlers; and (he might have added) is an

I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest: Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

Enter BASSANIO *and* ANTONIO, L.H.

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats: What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me: but soft; how many months
Do you desire?—Rest you fair, good Signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.
(*To Ant.*)

Ant. Shylock,—(*Crosses to centre.*)—albeit I neither lend nor borrow,
By taking, nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd, (1)
How much you would? (*To Bass.*)

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot,—three months you told me so. (*To Bass.*)

allusion to the Angel's thus laying hold on Jacob when he wrestled with him. See *Gen.* xxxii. 24, &c.

(1) Acquainted, informed.

Well then, your bond;—(*To Ant.*)—and, let me see,—but hear you;
Methought, you said, you neither lend, nor bor-
Upon advantage. [row,
Ant. I do never use it. [sheep,—
Shy. When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's
This Jacob from our holy Abraham was
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third.
Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
Shy. No, not take interest; not, as you would
Directly interest; mark what Jacob did. [say
When Laban and himself were compromis'd,
That all the eanlings (1) which were streak'd
Should fall as Jacob's hire, [and pied
The skilful shepherd peel'd me certain wands,(2)
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes;
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time [cob's.
Fall party-colour'd lambs, and those were Ja-
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
(*Crosses to* L.H.)
Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob serv'd for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of Heaven:
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver, ewes and rams?
Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.

(1) Lambs just dropt: from *ean*, *eniti*.
(2) Now called a *switch*.

Ant. (*Apart to Bass.*)—Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart:
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath! (1)
Shy. (*Musing.*)—Three thousand ducats,—
'Tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate. [you?
Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to
Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my monies, and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe:
You call me—misbeliever, cut throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to then; you come to me, and you say,
Shylock we would have monies; You say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; monies is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
Hath a dog money? Is it possible,
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?—or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,

(1) *Falsehood*, which as *truth* means *honesty*, is taken here for *treachery* and *knavery*, does not stand for *falsehood* in general, but for the dishonesty now operating.

With 'bated breath, and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
Fair Sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me—dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much monies.

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; (for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal (1) of his friend?)
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who if he break, thou may'st with better face
Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my monies, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

Ant. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show:—
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum, or sums, as are

(1) A *breed*, that is interest money bred from the principal. By the epithet *barren*, the author would instruct us in the argument on which the advocates against usury went, which is this; that money is a *barren* thing, and cannot, like corn and cattle, multiply itself. And to set off the absurdity of this kind of usury, he put breed and barren in opposition.

Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, in faith: I'll seal to such a bond,
And say, there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me,
I'd rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it;
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

(*Ant. and Bas. retire up the stage.*)

Shy. O father Abraham, what these Christians are;
Whose own hard dealing teaches them to suspect
The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this;

(*They advance.*)

If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship;
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard (1)

(1) *Fearful guard*, is a guard that is not to be trusted, but gives cause of fear. To *fear*, was anciently to give as well as feel terrors.

Of an unthrifty knave; and presently
I will be with you.

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew.—[*Exit Shylock*, R.H.
This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms, and a villain's mind. (1)

Ant. Come on; in this there can be no dismay,
My ships come home a month before the day.
[*Exeunt*; L.H.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *from* L.H.D.F.

Laun. Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master: The fiend is at mine elbow; and tempts me, saying to me, *Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away:* My conscience says,—*no; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed honest Gobbo; or*, as aforesaid, *honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels:* Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack; *via!*

(1) Kind words, good language.

says the fiend; away; says the fiend, *for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind*, says the fiend, *and run*. Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, —*my honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son*,—or rather an honest woman's son; —for, indeed, my father did something smack; something grow to, he had a kind of taste;— well, my conscience says,—*Launcelot, budge not; budge*, says the fiend; *budge not*, says my conscience: Conscience, say I, you counsel well! fiend, say I, you counsel well; to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, Heaven bless the mark! is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be rul'd by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself: certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnation, and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew: the fiend gives the more friendly counsel! I will run; fiend, my heels are at your commandment, I will run.

Gob. (*Without*, R.H.) Master, young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. O heavens, this is my true begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not:—I will try conclusions (1) with him.

(1) Try experiments.

Enter OLD GOBBO, R.H. (1) *with a basket.*

Gob. Master, young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand, at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left: marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. 'Twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him, or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? (*Aside.*) Mark me now: now will I raise the waters:—Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, Heaven be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot;—talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning,) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say, in plain terms, gone to heaven.

(1) It may be inferred from the name of Gobbo, that Shakspeare designed this character to be represented with a hump-back.

Gob. Marry, Heaven forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop?—Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy (Heaven rest his soul!)—alive, or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand blind, I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father, that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. (*Falls on his knees.*) Give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long, a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure, you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. (*Rises.*)—Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think, you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man: and, I am sure, Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipp'd might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin, than Dobbin my thill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure, he had more hair on his tail, than I have on my face, when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou chang'd! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present.

Laun. Give him a present! give him a halter: I am famish'd in his service; you may tell every finger I have in my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come; give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve not him, I will run as far as Heaven has any ground:—O rare fortune! here comes the man;—to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, *with* LEONARDO *and* STEPHANO, R.H.

Bass. You may do so;—See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making: and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

[*Exit Stephano*, R.H.

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. Heaven bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy; would'st thou ought with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man: that would, sir, as my father shall specify,—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I

serve the Jew; and I have a desire, as my father shall specify,—

Gob. His master and he (saving your worship's reverence,) are scarce cater-cousins.

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves, that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is,—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both!—What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. This is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well, thou hast obtain'd thy suit:
Shylock, thy master, spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee; if it be preferment,
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir; you have the grace of Heaven, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well: go, father, with thy son:—
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out.—Give him a livery (*To Leonardo.*)
More guarded (1) than his fellows'; see it done.

(*Bass. retires up the stage with Leon.*)

(1) More ornamented.

Laun. Father, in:—(*Crosses to* L.H.) I cannot get a service, no;—I have ne'er a tongue in my head.—Well, (*Looking on his palm.*) if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book. (1)—I shall have good fortune; go to, here's a simple line of life! here's a small trifle of wives; alas, fifteen wives is nothing: eleven widows, and nine maids, is a simple coming-in for one man: and then, to 'scape drowning thrice; and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; (2) here are simple 'scapes! Well, if fortune be a woman, she's a good wench, for this gear.—Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Laun. and old Gobbo,* L.H.D.F.

Bass. (*Advancing with Leon.*)—I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this;
These things being bought, and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee, go.

(1) *Table* is the palm of the hand extended. Launcelot congratulates himself upon his dexterity and good fortune, and, in the height of his rapture, inspects his hand, and congratulates himself upon the felicities in his table. The act of expanding his hand puts him in mind of the action in which the palm is shewn, by raising it to lay it on the book, in judicial attestations. *Well,* says he, *if any man in Italy have a fairer table,* that doth *offer to swear upon a book.*---Here he stops with an abruptness very common, and proceeds to particulars.

(2) A cant phrase to signify the danger of marrying.

Enter GRATIANO, R.H.

Gra. Where is your master?
Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit*, R.H.
Gra. Signior Bassanio.—
Bass. Gratiano!
Gra. I have a suit to you.
Bass. You have obtain'd it.
Gra. You must not deny me; I must go with you to Belmont.
Bass. Why then, you must:—but hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;—
Parts, that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they shew
Something too liberal; (1)—pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconstru'd in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.
Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes (2)

(1) Gross, coarse, licentious.
(2) Alluding to the manner of covering a hawk's eyes.

Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say, Amen;
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent (1)
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing. (2)

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gage me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity;
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment: but fare you well,
I have some business.

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo, and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.

SCENE I.—*Shylock's House.*

Enter JESSICA, *and* LAUNCELOT, L.H.

Jesse. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness:
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly,
And so farewell; I would not have my father
See me talk with thee.

(1) Grave appearance; show of staid and serious behaviour.

(2) Carriage, deportment.

Laun. Adieu!—tears exhibit my tongue.—Most beautiful Pagan,—most sweet Jew! (*Crosses to* R.H.) if a Christian did not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceiv'd:—but, adieu: these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit; adieu! [*Exit*, R.H.

Jess. Farewell, good Launcelot—
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me,
To be asham'd to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners: O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife;
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife.
[*Exit*, L.H.

SCENE III.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter SALARINO, SOLANIO, GRATIANO, *and* LORENZO, R.H.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper time;
Disguise us at my lodging and return
All in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Sol. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers. (1)

(1) A torch bearer seems to have been a constant appendage on every troop of maskers; it was anciently no degrading office. Queen Elizabeth's Gentlemen-Pensioners attended her to Cambridge, and *held torches* while a play was acted before her in the Chapel of King's College, on a Sunday Evening. Henry the VIIIth. when he went masked to Wolsey's palace, (now Whitehall,) had sixteen torch bearers.

Sala. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered;
And better, in my mind, not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two hours
To furnish us:—

Enter LAUNCELOT, L.H.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?
Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, (1) it shall seem to signify.
(*Gives Lorenzo a Letter.—Crosses to* R.H.
Lor. I known the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on,
Is the fair hand that writ.
Gra. Love news, in faith.
Laun. By your leave, sir. (*Crosses to* L.H.)
Lor. Whither goest thou?
Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.
Lor. Hold here, take this:—tell gentle Jessica, I will not fail her;—speak it privately, go.—
[*Exit Laun.* L.H.
Gentlemen,
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.
Sol. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.
Sala. And so will I.

(1) Break up was a term in carving.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano,
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.
Sala. 'Tis good we do so.
[*Exeunt Sala. and Sol.* L.H.
Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?
Lor. I must needs tell thee all: she hath directed,
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with.—
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,—
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.

SCENE IV.—*Shylock's House.*

SHYLOCK, L.H. *and* LAUNCELOT, R.H. *discovered.*

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:—
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize,
As thou hast done with me;—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;—
Why, Jessica, I say!
Laun. Why, Jessica! [call.
Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee
Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me, I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA, L.H.

Jess. Call you? What is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth (1) to supper, Jessica;
There are my keys:—but wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian.—Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house:—I am right loth to go;
There is some ill a brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go; my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together,—I will not say, you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on Black-monday (2) last, at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

(1) I am invited.

(2) *Black Monday* is *Easter Monday*, and was so called on this occasion: In the 34th of Edward III. (1360.) the 14th of April, and the morrow after Easter-day, King Edward, with his host, lay before the city of Paris, which day was full of dark mist and hail, and so bitter cold. Wherefore, unto this day, it hath been called the Blacke Monday.—*Stowe*, 264, 6.

It appears from a passage in Lodge's *Rosalynde*, 1592, that some superstitious belief was annexed to the accident of *bleeding at the nose*; "As he stood gazing, *his nose on a sudden bled*, which made him conjecture it was some friend of his."

Shy. What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squeaking of the wry-neck'd fife, (1)
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street,
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces:
But stop my house's ears, I mean, my casements;
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house.—By Jacob's staff, I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
But I will go.—Go you before me, sirrah;
Say, I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir.—
Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. (2) [*Exit*, R.H.

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were, Farewell mistress; nothing else.

Shy. The patch (3) is kind enough; but a huge feeder,
Snail slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild cat; drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him; and part with him

(1) It appears from hence, that the fifes, in Shakspeare's time were formed differently from those now in use, which are straight, not wry-necked.

(2) A proverbial phrase.

(3) The Fool.—*Patche* being the name of Cardinal Wolsey's fool.

To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse.—Well, Jessica, go in;
Perhaps, I will return immediately;
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you;—
Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit*, R.H.

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost.

SONG.—JESSICA.

Haste, Lorenzo, haste away,
To my longing arms repair,
With impatience I shall die;
Come, and ease thy Jessy's care:
Let me then, in wanton play,
Sigh and gaze my soul away. [*Exit*, L.H.

SCENE V.—*A Street in Venice—Before Shylock's House.*

Enter GRATIANO, SALARINO, *and* SOLANIO, *masqued*, L.H.

Gra. This is the pent-house, under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand. (1)

Sol. His hour is almost past.

Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

(1) *Desir'd us stand*, in ancient elliptical language, signifies, desired us to stand. The words, *To make*, are an evident interpolation, and consequently spoil the measure.

Sala. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!
Gra. That ever holds:—

Enter LORENZO, *masqued*, L.H.

Sala. Here comes Lorenzo:—more of this hereafter.
Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then.
Here dwells my father Jew.

SONG.—LORENZO.

My bliss too long my bride denies;
Apace the wasting summer flies:
Nor yet the wint'ry blasts I fear,
Nor storms nor night shall keep me here.

What may for strength with steel compare?
O, love has fetters stronger far!
By bolts of steel are limbs confin'd;
But cruel love enchains the mind.

No longer then perplex thy breast,
When thoughts torment, the first are best;
'Tis mad to go, 'tis death to stay,
Away, my Jessy, haste away.

JESSICA, *at the Window in Flat*, L.H.

Jess. Who are you? tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.
Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.
Jes. Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;
For who love I so much? and now who knows,
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?
Lor. Heaven, and thy thoughts, are witness that thou art. [pains.
Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the
Lor. But come at once;
For the close night doth play the run-away,
And we are staid for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit, from the window.*
Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew. (1)
Lor. Beshrew me, but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath prov'd herself:
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

(1) A jest arising from the ambiguity of *Gentile*, which signifies both a *Heathen* and *one well born*. Gratiano was in a masqued habit, to which it is probable that formerly, as at present, a large cape or hood was affixed.—Friars frequently swore by this part of their habit.

Enter JESSICA, D.F.L.H.

What, art thou come ?—On, gentlemen, away ;
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exeunt*, L.H

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter SALARINO *and* SOLANIO, R.H.

Sol. Why man, I saw Bassanio under sail ;
With him is Gratiano gone along ;
And in their ship, I am sure, Lorenzo is not.
Sala. The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the duke ;
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.
Sol. He came too late, the ship was under sail :
But there the Duke was given to understand,
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica :
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke,
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Sala. I never heard a passion so confus'd,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets :
My daughter !—O my ducats !—O my daughter !—

Fled with a Christian!—O my Christian ducats!—Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Sol. Marry, well remember'd:
I reason'd (1) with a Frenchman yesterday; who told me, that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wreck'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip report be an honest woman of her word.

Sala. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapt (2) ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband: but it is true, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O, that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!

Sol. Come, the full stop.

Sala. Why the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Sol. I would it might prove the end of his losses!

Sala. Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil cross thy prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK, L.H.

How now, Shylock; what news among the merchants?

(1) I conversed.

(2) To knap is to break short.—The word occurs in the *Psalms*.—"He knappeth the spear in sunder."

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

(*Crosses to Centre.*)

Sol. That's certain; I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Sala And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledg'd; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damn'd for it.

Sol. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Sala. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto;—a beggar, that used to come so smug upon the mart;—let him look to his bond: he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a christian courtesy:—let him look to his bond. (*Crosses to* L.H.)

Sol. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh; what's that good for?

Shy To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. (*Crosses to centre.*) He hath disgrac'd me, and hinder'd me of half a million: laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorn'd my nation, 'thwarted my bargains, cool'd my friends, heated my enemies; and what's his reason?—I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?

—fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? if you prick us, do we not bleed?—if you tickle us, do we not laugh?—if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge; if a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge.—(*Crosses to* R.H.)—The villainy you teach me, I will execute! and it shall go hard, but I will better the instruction.

Sala. Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn Jew. [*Exeunt Sol. and Sala.* L.H.

Enter TUBAL, R.H.

Shy. How, now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now:—two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels.—I would, my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! 'would she were hears'd at my foot, and the du-

cats in her coffin! No news of them?—why, so:—and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring, but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs, but o' my breathing: no tears, but o' my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too; Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what! ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy I thank God, I thank God!—Is it true? is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal?—Good news, good news: ha! ha!—Where? in Genoa?

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me:—I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it; I'll plague him; I'll torture him; I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them shewed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tu-

bal: it was my torquoise; (1) I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkies. (*Crosses to* L.H.)

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true: go, Tubal, fee me an officer, bespeak him a fortnight before: I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandize I will: go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue, go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

[*Exeunt; Shy.* L.H. *Tubal,* R.H.

SCENE II.—*Portia's House at Belmont.*

The three Caskets of gold, silver, and lead, are set out.

PORTIA, BASSANIO, L.H. NERISSA, GRATIANO, R.H. *Singers, Musicians, Pages, and other Attendants, discovered.*

Bass. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life

(1) *Torquise,* or *turkesse,* is a precious stone found in the veins of the mountains on the confines of Persia to the east, subject to the Tartars. The imaginary virtues ascribed to this stone are, that it faded or brightened in its colour as the health of the wearer increased or grew less: it is likewise said to take away all enmity, and to reconcile man and wife. This would be an invaluable gem in many married families.

To woo a maid in way of marriage; lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you, and begone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear,
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Bass. And so have I address'd me.—Fortune now
To my heart's hope!

Por. I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore, forbear a while:
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you: and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality. (1)
I could teach you
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me:
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn.
I speak too long: but 'tis to peize (2) the time;
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;
For, as I am, I live upon the rack.
Come, let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away then: I am lock'd in one of them;
If you do love me, you will find me out.—
Nerissa, and the rest, stand all aloof.—
(*They retire.*)
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;

(1) *Hate* would not incline me to wish you should stay.

(2) To *retard, by hanging weights upon it.* To *peize* is from *piser*, Fr. to weigh.

Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And wat'ry death-bed for him.

(*Music, whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself.*)

Bass. Some good direct my judgment!—Let me see.— [*desire.*"

"*Who chooseth me, shall gain what many men*
That may be meant
Of the fool multitude, that choose by show;
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,(1)
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve(2) it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
Thus ornament is but the guiled(3) shore
To a most dang'rous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty.—
Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.
"*Who chooseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.*"
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honourable

(1) Pleasing; winning favour.

(2) Justify it.

(3) Treacherous.---Shakspeare, in this instance as in many others, confounds the participles. *Guiled* stands for *guiling*.

Without the stamp of merit?
O, that estates, degrees, and offices, [nour
Were not deriv'd corruptly! and that clear ho-
Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover, that stand bare?
How many be commanded, that command?
And how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new varnish'd?—"*Much as he deserves.*"—
I'll not assume desert.— [*he hath.*"
"*Who chooseth me, must give and hazard all*
I'll none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre
lead, [aught,
Which rather threat'nest, than dost promise
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence,
And here choose I; Joy be the consequence;
Por. How all the other passions fleet to air!
O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstacy;
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
For fear I surfeit! [I here!
Bass. (*Opening the Leaden casket.*) What find
Fair Portia's counterfeit? (1) Here is the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

(Reads)—*You that choose not by the view,*
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and seek no new.

(1) *Counterfeit* anciently signified a likeness. So in Hamlet:—"The *counterfeit* presentiment of two brothers.

If you be well pleas'd with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll;—Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give, and to receive;
Yet doubtful whether what I say be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.—
(*Kissing her.*)

Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though, for myself alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you,
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high on your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings,(1) friends,
Exceed account. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself: and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you. [words,

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:
But when this ring

(1) Riches.

Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;
O, then be bold to say, Bassanio's dead.

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy! Good joy, my lord and lady!
(*Crosses to Por.*)

Gra. My lord Bassanio, and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For, I am sure, you can wish none from me:
And, when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be marry'd too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou can'st get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship; you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You lov'd, I lov'd; for intermission (1)
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there;
And so did mine too, as the matter falls:
For wooing here, until I sweat again;
And swearing, till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love; at last,—if promise last,—
I got a promise of this fair one here,
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achiev'd her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.

(1) Pause, *intervening time, delay.*---So in Macbeth---
"Gentle heaven,
"Cut short all intermission!"

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, 'faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

(*Bass. and Por. retire up the stage.*)

Gra. We'll play with them, the first boy, for a thousand ducats.

Ner. What, and stake down? [stake down,

Gra. No; we shall ne'er win at that sport, and
But who comes here? Lorenzo, and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend, Solanio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, *and* SOLANIO, L.H.

Bass. Lorenzo, and Solanio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome:—by your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord;
They are entirely welcome. [lord,

Lor. I thank your honour:—for my part, my
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Solanio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Sol. I did my lord,
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you.

(*Gives Bassanio a letter; all retire but Bass. and Sol.*)

Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

Sol. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will shew you his estate. [welcome.
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon' stranger; bid her
Your hand, Solanio; what's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Sol. Would you had won the fleece that he hath lost! (*They retire up the stage*, R.H.)
Por. There are some shrewd (1) contents in yon same paper,
That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!—
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words,
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart: when I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you

(1) Pointed, important.

That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engag'd myself to a dear friend,
Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper, as the body of my friend,(1)
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood.—But is it true, Solanio?
(*Sol. advances.*)
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Sol. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it: never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man:
He plies the Duke at morning and at night;
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice; twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes,
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble? [man,

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest
The best condition'd and unweary'd spirit

(1) "The paper *as* the body" means the paper resembles the body, is as the body. The expression is somewhat elliptical.

In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me, three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First, go with me to church, and call me wife;
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is done, bring your true friend along:
My maid Nerissa, and myself, meantime,
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away;
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. (*Reads.*) *Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and me. If I might but see you at my death: notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.*

Por. O love, despatch all business, and be gone.

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste: but, 'till I come again,
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.

SCENE III.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter SHYLOCK, ANTONIO, SALARINO, *and the Gaoler*, L.H.

Shy. Gaoler, look to him;—tell not me of mercy;—
This is the fool that lent out money gratis:—
Gaoler, look to him.

Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;
I have sworn an oath, that I will have my bond:
Thou call'd'st me dog, before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The Duke shall grant me justice.—I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond (1)
To come abroad with him at his request.

Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak. [speak:

Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-ey'd fool, (2)
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond.
[*Exit*, R.H.

Sala. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

Ant. Let him alone;

(1) Foolish.

(2) The epithet *dull-ey'd* is bestowed on *Melancholy* in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre.*

I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers,
He seeks my life; his reason well I know;
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

Sala. I am sure, the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, (1) if it be deny'd,
Will much impeach the justice of the state;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go;
These griefs and losses have so 'bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.—
(*Crosses to* L.H.)
Well, gaoler, on:—Pray Heav'n Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!
[*Exeunt*, L.H.

SCENE IV.—*Portia's House at Belmont.*

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, PORTIA, NERISSA, *and* BALTHAZAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your pre-
You have a noble and a true conceit [sence,

(1) For the denial of those rights to strangers, which render their abode in Venice so commodious and agreeable to them, would much impeach the justice of the state. The consequence would be, that strangers would not reside or carry on traffic here, and the wealth and strength of the state would be diminished.

Of god-like amity ; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But, if you knew to whom you shew this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief.
How dear a lover of my lord your husband ;
I know you would be prouder of the work,
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent me doing good,
Nor shall not now :
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore, no more of it : hear other things :
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house,
Until my lord's return : for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breath'd a secret vow,
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return :
There is a monastery two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition ; (1)
The which my love, and some necessity,
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart;
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
So fare you well, till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you.

(1) Command.

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.
Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.—
[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo*, L.H.
Now, Balthazar, [*Bal. advances*, R.H.
As I have ever found thee honest, true,
So let me find thee still: take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario:
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed (1)
Unto the tranect,(2) to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice:—waste no time in words,
But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.
Bal. Madam, I go with all convenient speed.
[*Exit*, R.H.
Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us?
Ner. Shall they see us?
Por. They shall, Nerissa;
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.

(1) With celerity like that of imagination.

(2) From *Tranare*, to swim across. Perhaps the word was in common use for a *ferry* in the time of Shakspeare.

SCENE V.—*The Garden at Belmont.*

Enter JESSICA *and* LAUNCELOT, L.H.

Laun. Yes, truly: for look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children; therefore, I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter:—therefore be of good cheer; for, truly, I think—you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good: and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed; so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then, I fear you are damn'd both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; (1) he hath made me a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enough before; e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we

(1) From St. Paul.—The unbelieving wife is sanctified by her husband.

grow all to be pork-eaters we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes. (*Crosses to* L.H.)

Enter LORENZO, L.H.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot and I are out: he tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter.

Lor. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly lord, what a wit snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done too, sir; only cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! wilt thou shew the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered: for your coming in to dinner, sir, why let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit*, R.H.

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words: and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me, as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

DUET.—LORENZO AND JESSICA.

Jes. In vows of everlasting truth,
You waste your idle hours, fond youth;
But leave me once, and I should find,
That out of sight were out of mind.

Lor. Ah, do thyself no wrong, my dear,
Affect no coy nor jealous fear;
Each beauteous object, I might see,
Would but inspire a thought of thee.

Jes. & Lor. Thus absence warms with fiercer flame,
The fine affections of the soul;
As distance points with surer aim
The faithful needle to its darling pole.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Court of Justice in Venice.*

The DUKE, *the* MAGNIFICOES, (*In Centre.*) ANTONIO, BASSANIO, (L.H.) SOLANIO, SALARINO, GRATIANO, *and others, discovered,* (R.H.)

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your grace. [answer
Duke. I am sorry for thee; thou art come to
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard,
Your grace hath taken great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, (1) I do oppose
My patience to his fury; and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.
Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.
Sol. He's ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK, R.H.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before
our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,

(1) *Envy* in this place means *hatred* or *malice.*

That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then, 'tis thought,
Thou'lt show thy mercy, and remorse, more
strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty:
And, where thou now exact'st the penalty,
(Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh)
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back;
Enough to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commisseration of his state
From brassy bosoms, and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks, and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew. [pose;

Shy. I have possess'd your grace of what I pur-
And by our holy sabbath have I sworn,
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter, and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh, than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But say, it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats
To have it ban'd; what, are you answer'd yet?
Some men there are, love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad, if they behold a cat;
Now for your answer:

As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor will I not,
More than a lodg'd hate, and a certain loathing,
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?
Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty. [answer.
Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my
Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love? [kill?
Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not
Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice? [the Jew:
Ant. I pray you, think you question (1) with
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they were fretted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well—do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which what's harder?)
His Jewish heart:—therefore I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

(1) Converse.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here are six.

Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them, I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'-ring none? [wrong?

Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no
You have among you many a purchas'd slave,
Which, like your asses, and your dogs, and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them:—shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs,
Why sweat they under their burdens? let their beds,
Be made as soft as yours, let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? you will answer,
The slaves are ours:—So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought, is mine, and I will have it:
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice:
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power, I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Sala. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters: call the messen-ger. [*Exit Sala.* R.H.D.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man? courage yet! [all,
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.
Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death; the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me;
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Enter SOLANIO *with* NERISSA, *dress'd like a lawyer's clerk*, R.H.D.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?
Ner. From both, my lord: Bellario greets your grace.
(*Presents a Letter.—Shylock kneels on one knee and whets his knife.*)
Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly? [there.
Shy. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt
Gra. Can no prayers pierce thee? [make.
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to
Gra. O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accus'd.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, (1) who hang'd for human slaughter,

(1) This allusion might have been caught from some old translation of Pliny, who mentions a Parrhasian turned

Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infus'd itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

Shy. 'Till thou can'st rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin.—I stand here for law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court:—
Where is he?

Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

Duke. With all my heart:—some three or four of you,
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.—
[*Exeunt Gra. and Sala.* R.H.D.
Meantime, the Court shall hear Bellario's letter.—
Reads.—Your grace shall understand, that, at the receipt of your letter, I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome, his name is Balthazer: I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turn'd o'er many books together; he is furnish'd with my opinion; which better'd with his own learning, (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend,) comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you,

into a wolf, because he had eaten part of a child that had been consecrated to Lycæan Jupiter.

let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverent estimation ; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes ;
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.—

Enter PORTIA, *dressed like a Doctor of Laws*, SOLANIO, *and* GRATIANO, R.H.D.

(*Portia advancing to the centre of the stage, bows to the court, and then approaches towards the Duke.*)

Give me your hand : Came you from old Bella-
Por. I did, my lord. [rio ?
Duke. You are welcome : take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court ?
Por. I am informed thoroughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew ?
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.
(*They stand forth—Portia in the centre of the stage.*)
Por. Is your name Shylock ?
Shy. Shylock is my name.
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ;
Yet in such rule, that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you (1) as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, (2) do you not ?

(1) Oppose, controvert.
(2) Within his reach or controul.

Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bless'd;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shews the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above the scepter'd sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then shew likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice: therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: (1) we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy; I have spoke thus much,
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there. [law
Shy. My deeds upon my head! (2) I crave the

(1) Portia referring the *Jew* to the Christian doctrine of salvation, is a little out of character.

(2) An imprecation adapted from that of the Jews to Pilate: "His blood be on us and our children."

The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, thrice the sum: If that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. (1) And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong;
And curb this cruel devil of his will.
Por. It must not be; there is no power in
Can alter a decree established: [Venice
'Twill be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state it cannot be.
Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!—
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!
Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is. [thee.
Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd
Shy. An oath, an oath; I have an oath in heaven.
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

(1) Malice oppresses honesty; a *true man* in old language is an *honest man*. We now call the jury *good men and true*.

Nearest the merchant's heart:—Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour.—
It doth appear, you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.
Por. Why then, thus it is.
You must prepare your bosom for his knife;—
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore, lay bare your bosom.
Shy. Ay, his breast:
So says the bond;—Doth it not, noble judge?—
Nearest his heart; those are the very words.
Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?
Shy. I have them ready.
Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?
Por. It is not so express'd; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.
Por. Come, merchant, have you any thing to say? [par'd.—
Ant. But little; I am arm'd, and well pre-
Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use,
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye, and wrinkled brow,
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end,
Say how I lov'd you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge,
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.
Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love;
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
Shy. These be the Christian husbands: I have a daughter;

Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!
(*Aside.*)
We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine;
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge! [breast;
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learned judge!—A sentence; come, prepare.
Por. Tarry a little;—there is something else.—
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh;
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the State of Venice.
Gra. O, upright judge!—Mark, Jew;—a learned judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shall see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.
Gra O, learned judge!—Mark, Jew;—a learned judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then;—pay the bond
And let the Christian go. [thrice,
Bass. Here is the money.
Por. Soft; [haste;—
The Jew shall have all justice!—soft!—no
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge! [flesh.

Por. Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less, nor more,
But just a pound of flesh; if thou tak'st more,
Or less, than a just pound,—be it but so much
As makes it light, or heavy, in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple! nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,—
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.

Por. He hath refus'd it in the open court;
He shall have merely justice, and his bond.

Gra. A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!—
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shy. Shall I not barely have my principal?

Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfei-
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew. [ture,

Shy. Why then the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.

Por. Tarry, Jew;
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,—
If it be prov'd against an alien,
That by direct, or indirect attempts,
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party, 'gainst the which he doth contrive,

Shall seize on half his goods ; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state ;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st :
For it appears by manifest proceeding,
That, indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contriv'd against the very life
Of the defendant ; and thou hast incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg, that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself :
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord ;
Therefore, thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of [our spirit,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it :
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's ;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state ; not for Antonio. (1)

Shy. Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that :
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house : you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio ?

Gra. A halter gratis ; nothing else, for Heaven's sake.

(1) That is, the state's moiety may be commuted for a fine, but not Antonio's.

Ant. So please my lord the Duke, and all the court,
To quit the fine for one half of his goods;
I am content, so he will let me have
The other half in use,—to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter.
Two things provided more,—that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo, and his daughter.

Duke. He shall do this; or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

Por. Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

Shy. I am content.

Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well; send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra. In christening thou shalt have two godfathers; more, (1)
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit Shylock*, R.H.D.

Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner. (*To Por.*)

Por. I humbly do desire your grace of pardon;
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet, I presently set forth.

(1) A jury of *twelve* men to condemn him to be hanged.

Duke. I am sorry, that your leisure serves you
Antonio, gratify this gentleman, [not.
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke, Magnificoes, and Train,* R.H.U.E.

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I delivering you, am satisfied,
And therein do account myself well paid;
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me, when we meet again,
I wish you well, and so take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I attempt you further:
Take some rememberance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee; grant me two things, I pray you,—
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield. [sake;
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your
And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you:
Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir,—alas, it is a trifle;
I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this;
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

Bass. There's more depends on this, than on the value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation;
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.
Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg; and now, methinks,
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.
Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And, when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.
Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad woman,
And know how well I have deserv'd this ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever.
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa*, R.H.
Ant. My lord, Bassanio, let him have the ring;
Let his deservings, and my love withal,
Be valu'd 'gainst your wife's commandment.
Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him,
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou can'st,
Unto Antonio's house:—away, make haste.—
[*Exit Gra.* R.H.
Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio. [*Exeunt*, L.H.

SCENE II.—*A Street in Venice.*

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA, R.H.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed,

And let him sign it; we'll away to-night,
And be a day before our husbands home:
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO, R.H.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well overtaken:
(*Crosses to Por.*)
My lord Bassanio, upon more advice, (1)
Hath sent you here this ring; and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.

Por. That cannot be:
This ring I do accept most thankfully,
And so, I pray you, tell him: further more,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
(*Crosses to* R.H.)

Gra. That will I do.

Ner. Sir, I would speak with you:—
I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.
(*Aside to Por.*)

Por. Thou may'st, I warrant: we shall have old swearing,
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll outface them, and out-swear them too.
(*Aside to Ner.*)
Away, make haste; thou know'st where I will tarry. [*Exit*, R.H.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

END OF ACT IV.

(1) More reflection.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Avenue to Portia's House at Belmont.*

LORENZO *and* JESSICA, *discovered, seated.*

Lor. The moon shines bright:—In such a night as this,
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew;
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice,
As far as Belmont.

Jes. And in such a night,
Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well;
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith.
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. And in such a night,
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would outnight you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter BALTHAZAR, L.H.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Bal. A friend.

Lor. A friend? what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?

Bal. Balthazar is my name; and I bring word,
My mistress will, before the break of day,
Be here at Belmont.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.—
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Laun. (*Within*, L.H.) Sola, sola, wo ha, ho, sola, sola!

Lor. Who calls?

Enter LAUNCELOT, L.H.

Laun. Sola! did you see master Lorenzo, and mistress
Lorenzo? sola, sola;

Lor. Leave hollaing man; here.

Laun. Sola! where? where?

Lor. Here.

Laun. Tell him, there's a post come from my master, (*Crosses to* R.H.) with his horn full of good news; my master will be here ere morning.
[*Exit*, R.H.

Lor. My friend Balthazar, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand.
[*Exit Bal.* R.H.

Enter PORTIA *and* NERISSA, *at a distance*, L.H.U.E.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceiv'd, of Portia.

Por. He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo,

By the bad voice.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. We have been praying for our husbands' welfare,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.

Por. Go in, Nerissa,
Give order to my servants, that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;—
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.
(*A tucket* (1) *sounds.*)

Lor. Your husband is at hand, I hear his trumpet.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, *and* GRATIANO, L.H.

Por. You are welcome home, my lord.

Bass. I thank you, madam: give welcome to my friend.—(*Gratiano and Ner. go up the stage.*)
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound. [to him;

Por. You should in all sense be much bound
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.

Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house:
It must appear in other ways than words,

(1) A flourish on a trumpet.—*Toccata*, Ital. a flourish on a trumpet.

Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy. (1)

Gra. (*Advancing with Ner.*) By yonder moon
I swear, you do me wrong;
In faith I gave it to the judge's clerk:
Would he were hang'd that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

Por. A quarrel, ho, already? what's the matter?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give to me; whose posy was
For all the world, like cutler's poetry (2)
Upon a knife, *Love me, and leave me not.*

Ner. What talk you of the posy, or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death;
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk!—but well I know,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on his face, that had it.

Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.

Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,—
A kind of boy; a little scrubbed boy (3)

(1) This verbal complimentary form, made up only of breath, i. e. words. So in Macbeth:
——"Mouth-honour, *breath*."

(2) Knives, were formerly inscribed, by means of *aqua fortis*, with short sentences in distich.

(3) Short, stunted.

No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk ;
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee ;
I could not for my heart deny it him. [you,
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And riveted so with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
And 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.
Bass. Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it. (*Aside.*)
Gra. My lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and, indeed,
Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine:
And neither man, nor master, would take aught
But the two rings.
Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you receiv'd of me.
Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it, but you see, my finger
Hath not the ring upon it,—it is gone.
Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed,
Until I see the ring.
Ner. Nor I in yours.
Till I again see mine,
Bass. Sweet Portia,

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When naught would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour (1) to retain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleas'd to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony? (2)
Nerissa teaches me what to believe;
I'll die for't, but some woman had the ring.

Bass. No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away;
Even he that had held up the very life [lady,
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet
I was enforced to send it after him. [begg'd
Had you been there, I think you would have
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:

(1) How much your honour was concerned in keeping the ring.

(2) What man could have so little modesty as to press the demand of a thing studiously *withheld*, as considered in the light of a *religious obligation*, or ceremony.

Since he hath got the jewel that I lov'd,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I'll not deny him any thing I have,
No, not my husband's bed:
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it; [gus:
Lie not a night from home; watch me, like Ar-
If you do not, if I be left alone,
Now, by mine honour, which is yet my own,
I'll have that doctor for my bed-fellow.

Ner. And I his clerk; therefore be well advis'd,
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

Gra. Well, do you so: let me not take him then;
For, if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels. [notwithstanding.

Por. Sir, grieve not you: you are welcome,

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth,
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly. [this;

Por. Then you shall be his surety; give him
And bid him keep it better than the other.

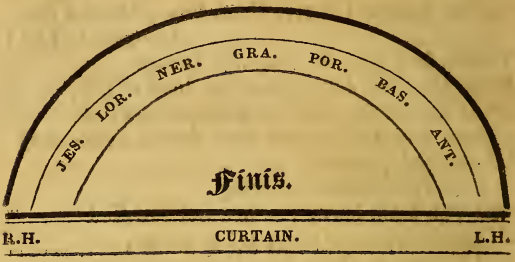
Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio: swear to keep this ring. [doctor!

Bass. By heaven,—it is the same I gave the

Por. I had it of him: pardon me, Bassanio:
For, by this ring, the doctor lay with me.
Ner. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this last night did lie with me.
Gra. Why, this is like the mending of high-
ways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough:
What! are we cuckolds, ere we have deserv'd
it? [amaz'd:
Por. Speak not so grossly.—You are all
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find, that Portia was the doctor;
Nerissa there, her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness, I set forth as soon as you,
And but even now return'd; I have not yet
Enter'd my house.—Antonio, you are welcome:
And I have better news in store for you,
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.
Bass. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?
Gra. Were you the clerk, that is to make me
cuckold? [do it,
Ner. Ay; but the clerk, that never means to
Unless he live until he be a man. [low;
Bass. Sweet doctor, you shall be my bed fel-
When I am absent, then sleep with my wife.
Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life, and
living;

For here I read for certain, that my ships
Are safely come to road.
Por. How now, Lorenzo?
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.—
(*Crosses to Lor.*)
There do I give to you, and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.
Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.
Por. It is almost morning,
And yet, I am sure, you are not satisfied
Of these events at full; let us go in;
And charge us there upon intergatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
Gra. Let it be so: (*Crosses to Ner.*) the first inter'gatory,
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on, is,
Whether till the next night she had rather stay
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day:
But were the day come, I should wish it dark,
That I were couching with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live, I'll fear no other thing
So sore, as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



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